

W A C O

WARRENSBURG/WHITEMAN ATARI COMPUTER OWNERS

WACO P.O. BOX 199, WARRENSBURG, MO 64093

SEP 1987

WHAT'S YOUR PRICE?

BY KEITH HANSEN

What's Your Price? Every man has his price. A common saying, but what does it mean and is it true? Most importantly, what's your price? Can you be bought? First, what does it mean to be "bought"? In my opinion, you're "bought" when you find the price you're willing to compromise your principles for. Fine, but what are your principles? Generally principles are the standards by which we live. What's right and what's wrong. We accept that it's wrong to lie, cheat and steal. Most people are willing to live with a little bit of untruth in their lives, maybe a little sliding-by once in a while.

Maybe even some "innocent" theft, such as taking a pen from work. But we each have a "line" we (theoretically) won't cross. Even if we remove the fear of punishment, most people will be basically honest.

They (we) have principles. For example, what's the price for your patriotism? Would you be tempted to sell out your country for \$1000 dollars? How about \$10,000? A million? Most of us would at least feel the temptation. On the other hand, most of us pride ourselves on our strength of character. Our basic honesty. We can't be "bought" in other words. Or can we? How many of you reading this own a personal computer? Considering this is a computer club newsletter, probably all of you. And of that number, how many own a piece of copyrighted software that you haven't paid for?

I got it from a friend, or from a L.A.'s group or off a "Pirate" bulletin board. It's been estimated that of all home computer owners, over 99% own some "pirated" software.

REVIEW By Marc LeBeau

This month's PD P.O.M. is called **SNOWBIRD**. It is an older game that has been in the library for some time. Therefore, some of you may already have it stuck away somewhere amongst your many Basic games. SNOWBIRD is a nice change from the usual Basic games out there today. For instance, you don't have to move a weird blob or man around a maze and eat all the dots and/or energy pellets while SCARY-looking (excuse my sarcasm) monsters chase you around. Instead you control a white snowbird that must eat lizards to survive. However (as any real snowbird knows) if the lizard turns white, it will taste better and thus give you more points. Also, the closer to the water the lizard is when it is eaten, the more points it is worth. To control your snowbird is very easy. To move the bird right or left, just move your joystick in that direction. But in order for your bird to move, he must be flying. This requires that you push the joystick button. The more you push, the higher he goes. It's as simple as that! After awhile the game can become a little boring, but stick with it. Some more little surprises will pop up onto the screen to keep it exciting. If you don't already have a copy of

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REVIEW By Marc LeBeau

KRAZY KATERPILLARS

Do you remember CENTIPEDE? Of course you do! It was the arcade game where the object was to kill as many of the centipedes that crossed the screen as you could before your lazers were destroyed. The game was popular a few years back and can still be found in most arcades. Well, in Issue #50 of ANALOG a new game was published. It was entitled KRAZY KATERPILLARS and can provide all the fun and excitement for your computer as CENTIPEDE did for the arcades. The object of this game is to shoot the caterpillars with your lazer. Huum, you say. Sounds JUST LIKE CENTIPEDE! Well, that's where you are wrong because if you miss with one of your shots it will shoot through the top of the screen and come back onto the screen at the bottom. Thus, you must always be on the

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PRICE CONT...

Software piracy is an interesting phenomena. What it really is, is theft. But the thieves rationalize it in various fascinating ways. Here's some I've heard. 1. "The price of software is too high anyway. I'd never buy this program, so what's the harm in owning a pirate copy? I'm not costing the publisher anything!" Good thing for Ferrari dealers that most people don't think it's alright to steal a car just because it's too expensive for them to buy! 2. "Everyone's doing it! You'd be surprised if I told you some of the people I know who are pirates." My 13 year old daughter uses the "everyone's doing it" excuse all the time. I don't accept it from her. Should I expect her to accept it from me? 3. "The software companies can't possibly prosecute because too many people are doing it." Oh good, now we only obey the law if there's a chance of getting caught. Fear is your only conscience. If you could steal a car with the same guarantee of immunity, you'd do it, right? 4. "It's not like I'm really stealing anything. The original disk is still owned by the guy/gal who bought it. It's not hurting anyone." How'd you like it if someone started taking money out of your paycheck every payday? You'd be down at the bank pounding on a desk. You don't think that programmers get paid? If they get \$3 per program sold and there are 100 pirate copies made for every program sold (probably a conservative estimate) then they've lost \$300. Say only

half those people would have actually bought the program. The other half just got it because it was "free". (I know people who collect software like baseball cards. They never use the stuff, they just own it.) That's still \$150. So it's alright to steal money from someone's paycheck, since, in reality, they're helpless to do anything about it. All of the above are rationalizations to avoid the uncomfortable truth that "pirating" is just a fancy word for theft. We call it "pirating" to glamorize what is otherwise a pretty sordid business: stealing someone else's work and denying them the just rewards for their labor. So what's your price? What's the asking price for the cheapest piece of stolen software that you own? Twenty dollars? Maybe discounted to \$15.95? You just found your price. Not a million dollars, not even a thousand. Fifteen ninety five. You're pretty cheap after all. I just wonder how that fits in with your image of yourself. Can you be bought?

YOU WERE.

XP CALCULATOR by Marc LeBeau

Alright all you Dungeon Masters out there. What is about your all-time, most-dreaded part of playing D&D? Is it be making up NPC's? Maybe it's putting up with a know-it-all player in

CONT NEXT COLUMN

KRAZY KRITTERS CONT...

lookout for stray lazer beams that can wipe your guns off before you can whistle Dix. Once you've killed all the caterpillars on one screen, you begin again with a whole new batch of those krazy kritters! The kids should really enjoy it and don't be surprised if you do, too!

CALCULATOR CONT...

the group? Could it be.....Satan??? Well, mine is figuring experience points after a long, hard adventure! So I finally did something about. I decided to let my good friend, ATARI, do all the hard work. XPCALC is what I came up with. The program goes step by step in helping you figure experience points for monsters, treasure, and even any extra experience you may feel the character deserves. The first part of the program deals with monsters and opponents. It begins by asking you their hit dice or level. Then you will be prompted for the number of hit points the creature had. You will then be asked if the opponent had any special abilities. Then you will see a summary of all the information you have given and you will be asked if the information is correct. After you have entered all the correct information, you will be asked how many opponents fit the same exact specifications. Finally, the program will ask if you'd like to continue figuring experience gained from

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CALCULATOR CONT...

monsters and the such or go
The next part of the program simply prompts you to enter the amount of gold and treasure that should be converted to experience. After you have entered that amount, you will be asked if you want to add any extra experience you feel the characters deserve. If you do, you may then do so. And last of all the program will ask the number of characters the experience is to be divided by. You then simply enter the number of characters that survived the adventure and you will get back the amount of experience to give to each character. Pretty simple, but a valuable utility for all Dungeon Masters!

LAWS CONT...

The time it takes to fix the error in your spreadsheet is inversely proportional to the time it took to do the damage in the first place.

People always remember the last mistake you made.

He who hesitates is probably smart.

The one who does the least amount of work always gets the most credit.

The less a computer peripheral costs, the more it costs to fix.

Confidence is the feeling you get just before you fully understand the problem.

No matter what goes wrong on your carefully planned database system, there's always someone who says they knew it would.

It's only when you need to knock on wood when you realize that the whole world is made up of aluminum and plastic.

CONT NEXT COLUMN

SNOWBIRD CONT...

SNOWBIRD, you can get it from the BBS or at the next club meeting. See ya then!

BBS

Don't forget about our BBS. The telephone number is

1-816-747-3285

24 HOURS A DAY, 300 BAUD

LAWS CONT...

You always find the information that you need on the page of the manual you look at last.

The first place to look for information is in the section you least expect to find it.

You know you have a REAL crisis on your hands when you can't say "Let's forget the whole thing".

From

Bytown Bytes

LAWS OF COMPUTING

When you get to the point where you really understand your computer system, it's probably obsolete.

As soon as you find that your microcomputer is easy to use, add some peripherals you don't understand how to use.

Whatever happens behave like you meant it to happen.

Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it the most.

CONT NEXT COLUMN

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE?



WHOOPS!

WARRENSBURG ATARI COMPUTER OWNERS

P.O. BOX 199

WARRENSBURG, MO 64093

SLCC NEWSLETTER SWAP
P.O. BOX 1506
SAN LEANDRO, CA 94577

FOR:

AUGUST/SEPT.
H . A . C . O .
WRAMBLINGS



RANDOM THOUGHTS by Les Lynam

Welcome to the August(??) or September(??) or August/September(??) W.A.C.O. Wramblings. What happened? Well.... as you may recall from the last issue, Keith Hansen (our first and only newsletter editor in the almost 2 year existance of the Wramblings) asked to be relieved of duty, since editting and being the SysOp of the club BBS were taking all his time. Well, I decided to take on the chore until someone else volunteered. Almost immediately, someone did (amazing!!!) Steve Dunn and Roger Dunning decided to give it a go on the ST, using Publishing Partner. Being novices at the Desktop Publishing game, it took a little while for them to "find the gearshift" in P.P. and getting it running. This was compounded by the fact that Steve has received orders to Korea and will be leaving September 10th. Anyway, to shorten the story, there were many hassles getting it out on time, so Roger dubbed it the September issue. (It is early for our September deadline, but late for our August deadline, so I guess Roger wanted to be early on their first ST attempt!) What will the next issue bring? Will it be done on the ST or the XE? Stay tuned, we don't know yet!

For those of you who remember me doing a demo of Daisy-Dot at the last meeting (without a printer!), you will recall that I made samples of all the D-Dot NLQ fonts and forgot to bring them to the meeting. Well this is an actual sample of DD printed on my SG-10 using the Roman font.

One more thought in this limited space. If you have seen a copy of the ST X-press floating around that mentions a new drive being developed in Germany using CD laser technology, I just have to comment. They claim to have a working read/write laser disk that can store 500 terabytes of data. For those of you who have ever played with a 20 MEG hard drive, 500 terabytes is the equivalent of 25 MILLION 20MEG hard drives! They also estimate that it will cost about \$250. Was this the April Fool issue? If not, you will be able to run a CompuServe sized BBS from your Atari. Randomly yours 'til next time!

NET meeting! September 26th at 0500 at 1:00